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III.—Note on the Rise of a Recent Superstition in London.—The Lion Shilling. By HYDE CLARKE.

WHAT is called "The Lion Shilling" is a shilling of George IV of 1826, with the royal crest of a lion on the crown on the obverse. This is considered by many persons to be a lucky shilling, and that so long as anyone has a lion shilling in his pocket he will be lucky. Many respectable persons have carried lion shillings for years, till they are well-worn, and the superstition is well known among the lower classes, both to men and women.

How this superstition originated does not appear. It is not founded on a preceding legend, and must have sprung up since 1826. I have known of it from 1832.

The feature of interest to the Society is this, that a superstition should have sprung up in our days, and have spread widely in the large population of the metropolis, and for anything I have known, elsewhere.

A discussion followed, in which Col. Lane Fox and Dr. Donovan took part.

The Honorary Secretary then read the second part of the first portion of Mr. Howorth's paper, on the Westerly Drifting of Nomads, as already given in previous pages.

A discussion followed, in which remarks were made by Mr. Hyde Clarke, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Black.

ORDINARY MEETING, JANUARY 26th, 1869.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, F.R.S., *President, in the Chair.*

New Members.—Captain LINDSAY BRINE, R.N.; Dr. JONES LAMPREY, 67th Regiment.

Colonel A. Lane Fox, Hon. Sec., exhibited a marble armlet which he had recently obtained from Mr. H. Warren Edwards, H. M. Consul at Lukoja on the Niger, and Assistant in charge of the Niger expedition. The ring is of black marble, with white veins, it is $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. interior diameter, and 1 in. thick, flat on the inside, and rounded on the outside. The following letter on the subject was read to the Meeting:—

"Dear Sir,—I am afraid that I can give you but little information respecting the ring. I bought it of Dantowai, a Haussa-man, in August, 1865. He wore it on the left arm, just above the elbow. I was then at Lukoja, confluence of the Barie and Niger. Dantowai had been in the employ of

Dr. Baikie; he had considerable knowledge of the country, having spent nearly the whole of his life (he appeared to be about 45 to 50 years old) in travelling from place to place, by his own account kidnapping boys, and selling them at the nearest place he could do so with safety. This ring he had brought some considerable distance. The stone is found plentifully where it was made, but only a few of them are made, the labour being too great; the tools used are of iron. It is afterwards rubbed with another kind of stone to make it smooth. The name of the place I find I have omitted noting. He attached considerable value to it, and I had some trouble in inducing him to part with it. I wish I could have furnished you with a more full and interesting account of it and the people who make them. I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

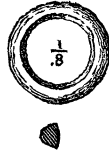
“ H. WARREN EDWARDS.”

Mr. Edwards also stated that this was the only ring of this material he saw during two years residence at Lukoja.

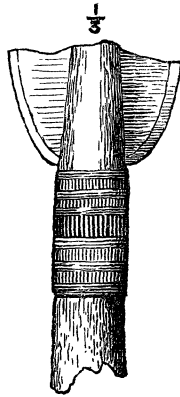
Col. A. Lane Fox exhibited a bronze spear, with a gold ferule and a shaft of bog oak, obtained from Lough Gur, County Limerick, respecting which he communicated the following remarks:—

The spear exhibited this evening, which is, I believe, quite unique in so far as its gold ferule and shaft are concerned, was found either in, or more probably in the peat bog adjoining, Lough Gur, County Limerick, a locality which, as many Members of the Society are probably aware, has been very productive of implements of stone and bronze. I have not been able to ascertain the exact date of its discovery, but from inquiries which I have caused to be made of a person residing in the neighbourhood, I have reason to believe that it was found in the year 1857 or 8. It was taken to the late Lord Guillamore, on whose property I believe it was found, and it appears to have remained in his possession until May, 1868, when it was purchased by the Rev. Dr. Neligan, at an auction which took place at Lord Guillamore's house. On the 7th December, 1868, Dr. Neligan's things were sold at Sotheby's, and the spear then fell into my hands.

It is 6 ft. 1 in. in length from the point to the but end of the shaft. The bronze head is 1 ft. 4 in. from the point to the base of the socket. The blade is 1 ft. 2 in. long, and $3\frac{1}{8}$ th greatest breadth, of the form known as the leaf-shaped. The socket is 2 in. long and $1\frac{1}{8}$ th in. outside diameter. Around the socket at top and bottom are two ferules of very thin gold each $\frac{3}{8}$ th in. in width. Each ferule is ornamented with three bands, scored with from four to seven incised transverse lines,



MARBLE ARMLET FROM LUKOJA.



BRONZE SPEAR-HEAD FROM LOUGH GUR.

and separated from each other by two bands scored with incised longitudinal lines. The two ferules are separated by a space about $\frac{3}{16}$ th in. in width, in which longitudinal lines of gold have been let into grooves in the bronze, leaving an intervening line of bronze between each of the gold lines. The two gold ferules are nearly perfect, but the gold has disappeared from all but four of the longitudinal lines upon the space between the ferules. The shaft which, exclusive of the part inserted in the socket is 4 ft. $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, is composed of bog-oak, cut, and not turned; it is larger in the middle, and tapers slightly towards both ends. The shaft has since been broken in two, but the pieces fit together sufficiently to show the original length.

I have been unable to obtain an authentic account of the discovery of the spear. Dr. Neligan, however, informs me that Lord Guillamore's butler assured him that he had seen the spear brought up from the lake, with the shaft attached to it, and that it was then covered with bog stuff. In confirmation of this it may be seen that the rivet is covered with patina, and that the patina when pressed to one side fits accurately to the sides of the rivet holes in such a manner as to show that the two corroded together. I have submitted the spear to Mr. Phillips, jeweller, of Cockspur Street, for examination, and he has given me his decided opinion that the condition of the patina upon the rivet may be regarded as a proof of genuineness. Not satisfied, however, with the evidence afforded by the patina, I thought it advisable to submit the wood of the shaft to an examination by Dr. Hooker, F.R.S., Director of the Royal Gardens at Kew, who has been kind enough to send me the following opinion on the subject:—

“ROYAL GARDENS, KEW, *January 4th*, 1869.

“DEAR COL. LANE FOX—I have carefully examined your spear-shaft, and compared the wood with our specimens of Bog-oak in the Museum of Economic Botany here. In respect of its origin, it must come under one of four categories.

“1st. It may have been originally made of fresh oak, and become transferred into bog oak by immersion. This is most improbable. The weathered surface of all our specimens of bog-oak presenting an entirely different character.

“2nd. It may have been made recently of bog-oak, and to fit the spear. I am of opinion that this cannot have been the case; because the cut surfaces are wholly unlike those of recently cut bog oak, and altogether resemble the old cut surfaces of specimens of bog oak that have been dug up recently, but which were cut ages ago. A due examination of the fissures

and depressed surfaces and of the but end, convinces me that the shaft has not been recently worked, and that it has been cleaned only, and this very superficially, of late years. The surfaces within the socket and those exposed by the corroded central part of the spear-head, are likewise confirmatory of its age.

“3rd. It may be supposed that it is an old worked shaft, made for another purpose, but only lately fitted to the spear-head; but, beside the extreme improbability of a bog oak shaft of precisely suitable form and dimensions being at hand for this purpose, the condition of the end in the socket, and of the socket and pins, wholly negative such an assumption.

“4th. The only alternative is that the shaft was originally made for the spear-head, and I see no reason to doubt that such was the case, whilst there is much evidence (see 2) in its favour.

“It will be observed that the shaft tapers at both ends, an unlikely form for a forger to have selected—and that it is *not turned*, but shaped out of a solid block of oak, which must have been of very considerable dimensions, and very difficult to work, suggesting the dignity of its original possessor.

“Very faithfully yours, JOS. D. HOOKER.”

The foregoing opinion of Dr. Hooker is in all respects favourable to the genuineness of the shaft, and suggests the probability of its having owed its preservation to the fact of its having been originally constructed of bog oak. The part of the shaft at the base of the socket is much worn, evidently by the friction of the socket in use; and, owing probably to the wood having slightly shrunk, it fits the socket much more loosely than it would have done had it been recently fitted to it. Although this is, I believe, the first example on record of a bronze spear from Ireland or England inlaid with gold, swords and other implements of the bronze period so ornamented, have been discovered in Denmark, and are figured in the “Atlas of Northern Antiquities.” I may add that the spear has been exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries and has elicited from several of the members, including perhaps our best authority on the subject, Mr. Franks, a general opinion in favour of the genuineness of both ferule and shaft.

Mr. Black exhibited a Collection of Chinese Coins and Medals used as Talismans and Charms, upon which he made the following remarks:—

IV.—On Chinese Charms. By W. H. BLACK, Esq.

FOLLOWING up Mr. Hyde Clarke’s recent observations, on the use of coins as charms, a collection of Chinese charms was ex-